

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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TAGS: SHUM

SUBJ: WORLD CONFERENCE TO COMBAT RACISM AND RACIAL
DISCRIMINATION - CASE OF MOHAMMED SAID BURKAN - STATEMENT
BY PLO DELEGATE

1. IN A STATEMENT THAT HAD SOME IMPACT ON THE DELEGATES
AT THE WORLD CONFERENCE TO COMBAT RACISM AND RACIAL
DISCRIMINATION THE PLO SPOKESMAN REFERRED TO THE CASE OF
MOHAMMED SAID BURKAN, AN ARAB CITIZEN (PRESUMABLY A
JORDANIAN), WHO WAS DENIED PERMISSION TO BUY AN APARTMENT
IN THE JEWISH QUARTER OF THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM. THE
PLO SPOKESMAN QUOTED FROM THE JERUSALEM POST OF JULY 5,
1978 REPORTING THAT THE PRESIDENT OF THE HIGH COURT, MR.
COHEN, HAD RULED THAT SUCH DISCRIMINATION IS LEGITIMATE
AND JUSTIFIED BY POLITICAL AND SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS. HE
WENT ON TO QUOTE JUDGE COHEN AS FOLLOWS: "...AND THAT ANY
DISCRIMINATION AGAINST JORDANIAN CITIZENS IN THIS RESPECT
IS LEGITIMATE AND JUSTIFIED BY POLITICAL AND SECURITY
CONSIDERATIONS." (JERUSALEM POST, JULY 5, 1978). "THE
APPLICANT CANNOT ARGUE FROM THE FACT THAT HE HAS BEEN
DISCRIMINATED AGAINST WHEN AT THE SAME TIME HE IS A
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FERVENT PARTISAN OF DISCRIMINATION, HAVING HIMSELF
DECLARED THAT HIS FAITH FORBIDS HIM FROM SELLING HIS
PROPERTY TO JEWS. THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE TAKES NO
ACCOUNT OF PLEAS ON THE SUBJECT OF DISCRIMINATION WHEN
THE PLAINTIFF HIMSELF EXERCISES DISCRIMINATION TOWARD
OTHERS." (MAARIV, JUNE 1978).

2. THE PLO SPOKESMAN MADE A MAJOR POINT OF SAYING THAT ISLAMIC LAW CONTAINS NO PROHIBITION OF THIS KIND, EITHER AGAINST JEWS OR ANYONE ELSE.

3. HE ALSO QUOTED REMARKS ALLEGEDLY MADE ON JUNE 18 BY THE ISRAELI AMBASSADOR TO SOUTH AFRICA, YITZAK UNNA, WHO HAD THE FOLLOWING QUESTION PUT TO HIM BY A JEWISH JOURNALIST: "MR. AMBASSADOR, DO YOU CONSIDER THAT, BECAUSE OF THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SOUTH AFRICA AND ISRAEL, THE JEWISH COMMUNITIES OF AMERICA, ISRAEL, OR FOR THAT MATTER, ANY OTHER COUNTRY, OUGHT TO SHOW GOODWILL TOWARD SOUTH AFRICA?"

4. AMBASSADOR UNNA ALLEGEDLY REPLIED: "SOUTH AFRICA HAS ITS FAULTS BUT I BELIEVE THAT AT THE END OF YOUR VISIT HERE YOU WILL HAVE A MORE CORRECT IMPRESSION OF THIS COUNTRY. YOU WILL BE ABLE TO DRAW A DISTINCTION BETWEEN HOSTILE PROPAGANDA AND THE REALITY OF THE SITUATION WHICH, IN MY VIEW, IS MUCH LESS HORRIBLE THAN THE ANTI-SOUTH AFRICAN PROPAGANDA WOULD HAVE US BELIEVE. AND IF YOU PRESENT IN YOUR VARIOUS NEWSPAPERS AN EXACT PICTURE OF SOUTH AFRICA AS YOU HAVE SEEN IT, YOU WILL BE FAVORING ISRAELI-SOUTH AFRICAN RELATIONS AND RENDERING A SERVICE TO SOUTH AFRICA."

5. I WOULD LIKE TO BE ABLE TO RESPOND TO CHARGES LIKE
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THIS AND WOULD APPRECIATE KNOWING THE FACTS WITH RESPECT TO EACH OF THE ABOVE MATTERS AND ANY COMMENTARY THAT WOULD EXPLAIN THE ISRAELI POSITION. VANDEN HEUVEL

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